

INCOMING TELEGRAM

10 Department of State

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NO: 448, February 7, 9 a.m.

SENT DEPARTMENT 448, REPEATED INFORMATION LODNON 74, DHAHRAN
247, AMMAN, BEIRUT, BAGHDAD, CAIRO DAMASCUS UNNUMBERED.First local press mention of Mayor Wagner's refusal greet King
Saud appeared February 5 in front-page editorial AL-BILAD (semi-
official). Also broadcasted over Mecca Radio.OCB
USIA
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Headline "Zionist Robert Wagner and his gang can never defile
exalted position King Saud." Editorial places responsibilities for
"shameless behavior" squarely on Zionists and "conscienceless
Zionist named Robert Wagner" and contrasts Wagner's action with
courtesy and warm reception accorded King by official and non-
official Americans. Noting American press reaction to incident,
paper reports "thousands telegrams received by King expressing
American people's resentment at Mayor's conduct." Stated Wagner
has provided world "opportunity to witness base manners of Zionists."
In conclusion editorial notes "official comments" describing King
as "greatest US guest in hundreds years" substantiated by Presi-
dent's precedent-breaking action in personally meeting King at
airport.

Comment: Public reaction seems generally accord with editorial.
Public naturally resents discourtesy to their ruler, but most
appear appreciate responsibility is that of small minority and not
of Federal Government or people at large. Some of more sophis-
ticated look on incident as blessing in disguise - - a sharp re-
minder to USG of "un-American character of Zionist movement."

LMS:DMB/16

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/WR JENKINS

REVIEWED BY J. B. M. M. DATE 12/15/82

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